



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture  
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## COLORADO SHEEP & LAMB LOSSES – 2014

Colorado farmers and ranchers lost 50,000 head of sheep and lambs to all causes in 2014, representing a total value of \$10.03 million, according to a survey conducted in January 2015 by the USDA NASS Mountain Regional Field Office. A comparable survey for 2012 indicated that 48,000 head of all sheep and lambs, valued at \$8.67 million, were lost from all causes. Higher sheep and lamb prices and higher death loss are responsible for the 16 percent increase in sheep and lamb value lost compared to the previous survey. The number of head lost was up 4 percent from 2011. The total inventory of all sheep and lambs at the beginning of 2015 was 420,000 head, up 15 percent from the total inventory of 365,000 head at the beginning of 2014. The beginning inventory of 220,000 head in 2015 for breeding sheep and lambs is up 29 percent from 2014. The inventory of market sheep and lambs, at 200,000 head, increased 3 percent from the 195,000 head in 2014. The 2014 lamb crop totaled 200,000 head, up 14 percent from 2013. Total sheep and lamb death losses in 2014 accounted for 8.5 percent of the available supply of animals during the year.

**Predators** caused an estimated \$3.79 million in losses of sheep and lambs during 2014 compared with a value of \$2.37 million in 2011. They accounted for 18,800 head (38 percent of all losses) in 2014 compared with 13,100 head (27 percent of all losses) in 2011. Predator losses represented 3.2 percent of the available supply in 2014, up from the 2.4 percent of the sheep and lamb supply in 2011. Lamb losses by all predators amounted to 13,700 head in 2014 compared to 11,000 head in 2011. Coyotes, the most damaging predator, were responsible for 56 percent (10,600 head valued at \$2.13 million) of the total sheep and lamb losses to predators. Bears were the next most damaging predator claiming a total of 4,200 head of sheep and lambs valued at \$849,500. Mountain lions killed 1,100 head of sheep and lambs valued at \$221,500 during 2014. Foxes were the next most deadly accounting for 700 sheep and lambs. Eighty-eight percent of all predator losses occurred in the Northwest & Mountain and Southwest Districts.

The total value of sheep and lamb losses from **non-predator causes** was estimated at \$6.24 million in 2014, down 1 percent from \$6.29 million in 2011. Non-predator losses of 31,200 head in 2014 represented 62 percent of all losses, down from 34,900 head (73 percent of all losses) in 2011. Other and unknown non-predators were the leading cause of non-predator sheep and lamb losses at 10,500 head (34 percent). The category of weather related issues was the second most damaging at 10,200 head (33 percent). Sixty-seven percent of all non-predator losses occurred in the Northwest & Mountain, and Northeast Districts.

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**SHEEP & LAMBS: Inventory, Death Losses, and Value of Losses, Colorado, 2005-2014 <sup>1/</sup>**

Year	January 1 Inventory	Lamb Crop	Death Losses					
			Sheep	All Lambs			All Sheep & Lambs	
	All Sheep & Lambs		Total Losses	Before Docking	After Docking	All Lambs	Total Losses	Percent of Supply <sup>2/</sup>
	<b>1,000 Head</b>				<b>1,000 Head</b>			<b>Percent</b>
2005	365	225	6	10	20	30	36	6.0
2007	400	210	11	12	19	31	42	6.8
2009	410	210	9	10	17	27	36	5.7
2011	370	170	16	12	20	32	48	8.7
2014	365	200	10	21	19	40	50	8.5
2015	420	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

Year	Total Sheep & Lamb Losses By Cause				Value Of Losses		
	Predator Losses		Non-Predator Losses				
	Total Loss	Percent of Supply <u>2/</u>	Total Loss	Percent of Supply <u>2/</u>	Predator	Non-Predator	Total
	<b>1,000 Head</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>1,000 Head</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>		
2005	14.6	2.4	23.4	3.9	1,579.5	2,558.5	4,138.0
2007	23.8	3.8	18.2	2.9	2,441.8	2,050.3	4,492.1
2009	16.0	2.5	20.0	3.2	1,671.0	2,166.5	3,837.5
2011	13.1	2.4	34.9	6.3	2,374.0	6,294.0	8,668.0
2014	18.8	3.2	31.2	5.3	3,385.5	6,244.5	10,030.0

<sup>1/</sup> No survey was conducted covering 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, or 2013.

<sup>2/</sup> Supply includes sheep and lambs on hand January 1, plus lamb crop, plus lamb losses before docking.

**SHEEP & LAMBS: Number of Head and Value of Loss by Cause, Colorado, 2011 and 2014 1/**

Cause	Sheep				Lambs				Total Sheep & Lambs			
	No. Lost		Value <u>2/</u>		No. Lost		Value <u>2/</u>		No. Lost		Value <u>2/</u>	
	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014	2011	2014
<b>Predators:</b>	<b>1,000 Head</b>		<b>\$1,000</b>		<b>1,000 Head</b>		<b>\$1,000</b>		<b>1,000 Head</b>		<b>\$1,000</b>	
Bear	0.9	1.9	177.6	389.5	1.3	2.3	228.8	460.0	2.2	4.2	406.4	849.5
Bobcat	...	...	...	...	0.5	0.3	72.0	60.0	0.5	0.3	72.0	60.0
Coyote	1.0	2.6	179.7	533.0	6.7	8.0	1,189.8	1,600.0	7.7	10.6	1,369.5	2,133.0
Dog	0.1	0.2	9.1	41.0	0.2	0.3	42.2	60.0	0.3	0.5	51.3	101.0
Eagle	...	...	...	...	0.3	0.4	66.9	80.0	0.3	0.4	66.9	80.0
Fox	...	...	...	...	1.0	0.7	173.0	140.0	1.0	0.7	173.0	140.0
Mountain Lion	0.1	0.3	26.1	61.5	0.6	0.8	110.0	160.0	0.7	1.1	136.1	221.5
Other Predators <u>3/</u>	0.1	0.1	10.9	20.5	0.5	0.9	88.2	180.0	0.6	1.0	99.1	200.5
<b>Total Predators</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>403.4</b>	<b>1,045.5</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>1,970.6</b>	<b>2,740.0</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>2,374.0</b>	<b>3,785.5</b>
<b>Non-Predators:</b>												
Diseases	8.0	0.1	1,446.9	20.5	1.8	0.2	327.5	40.0	9.8	0.3	1,774.4	60.5
Toxemia	3.0	0.1	600.0	20.5	1.1	2.3	201.8	460.0	4.1	2.4	801.8	480.5
Weather related	0.3	0.4	58.0	82.0	10.6	9.8	1,889.6	1,960.0	10.9	10.2	1,947.6	2,042.0
Lambing problems	0.5	0.8	95.5	164.0	1.9	3.3	342.7	660.0	2.4	4.1	438.2	824.0
Old age	1.0	1.8	212.2	369.0	...	...	...	...	1.0	1.8	212.2	369.0
Poisoning	0.4	0.8	80.6	164.0	0.8	0.8	133.4	160.0	1.2	1.6	214.0	324.0
Theft	0.2	...	33.2	...	0.3	0.3	48.3	60.0	0.5	0.3	81.5	60.0
Other causes <u>4/</u>	0.5	0.9	33.2	184.5	4.5	9.6	791.0	1,900.0	5.0	10.5	842.2	2,084.5
<b>Total Non-Predators</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>2,559.6</b>	<b>1,004.5</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>3,734.4</b>	<b>5,240.0</b>	<b>34.9</b>	<b>31.2</b>	<b>6,294.0</b>	<b>6,244.5</b>
<b>Total All Causes</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>2,963.0</b>	<b>2,050.0</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>5,705.0</b>	<b>7,980.0</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>8,668.0</b>	<b>10,030.0</b>

1/ Includes all lambs losses before and after docking.

2/ Sheep value is based on a two year average value per head of ewes 1 year old and older. Lamb value is based on the marketing year average price received for a 90 pound lamb. Totals may not add due to rounding.

3/ Includes ravens, vultures, wolves and unknown predators

4/ Includes unknown non-predator causes; on back, digestive and respiratory problems.

**SHEEP & LAMBS: Percent of Head Loss Within Each Agricultural Statistics District,  
by Type of Predator, Colorado, 2014 1/**

Cause	Agricultural Statistics District						State
	NW & Mountain	Northeast	East Central	Southwest	San Luis Valley	Southeast	
<b>Predators:</b>	<b>Percent</b>						
Bear	45.2	...	...	54.8	...	...	100.0
Bobcat	66.7	...	...	33.3	...	...	100.0
Coyote	28.3	2.8	0.9	57.5	9.4	0.9	100.0
Dog	40.0	...	...	20.0	40.0	...	100.0
Eagle	75.0	...	...	25.0	...	...	100.0
Fox	71.4	28.6	...	...	...	...	100.0
Mountain Lion	18.2	9.1	...	72.7	...	...	100.0
Other Predators <u>2/</u>	30.0	...	...	40.0	20.0	...	100.0
<b>Total Predators</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>52.7</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>

1/ Includes all lamb losses both before and after docking. Totals may not add due to rounding.

2/ Includes ravens, vultures, wolves and unknown predators.

**SHEEP & LAMBS: Percent of Head Loss Within Each Agricultural Statistics District,  
by Non-predator Causes, Colorado, 2014 1/**

Cause	Agricultural Statistics District						State
	NW & Mountain	Northeast	East Central	Southwest	San Luis Valley	Southeast	
<b>Non-Predators:</b>	<b>Percent</b>						
Total Diseases	33.3	...	...	33.3	33.3	...	100.0
Toxemia	12.5	66.7	...	16.7	4.2	...	100.0
Weather related causes	86.3	2.9	...	8.8	2.0	...	100.0
Lambing problems	41.5	4.9	2.4	46.3	2.4	2.4	100.0
Old age	33.3	11.1	5.5	33.3	5.5	11.1	100.0
Poisoning	43.8	...	...	50.0	...	6.3	100.0
Theft	...	...	...	100.0	...	...	100.0
Other non-predators <u>2/</u>	9.5	51.4	4.8	10.5	22.9	1.0	100.0
<b>Total Non-Predators</b>	<b>42.3</b>	<b>24.7</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>19.6</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>

1/ Includes all lamb losses both before and after docking. Totals may not add due to rounding.

2/ Includes unknown non-predator causes; on back, digestive and respiratory problems.